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THE building industry continues to be the dominant factor in the general business situation. Because of the ramifications of the materials used, as well as the pace which it usually sets for all other industries in the matter of wages, building and construction work exercises a great influence on many other industries. The past week, however, has brought forward the first tangible indication of a realization on the part of labor that excessive wages in the building industry are not an unmitigated benefit. In an agreement just announced, both employers and employees taboo "snowballing" wages. This recognition of cold facts is, however, too belated to prevent a decline in May of 20% in the value of building contracts awarded in Greater New York and a decrease in building permits in 131 cities, amounting to 17% in May as compared with April and 24.2% as compared with March.

Activity during May in many of the leading industries has maintained the high level foreshadowed earlier in the year. The iron and steel industry has again broken previous high records. The output of pig iron in May exceeded that in April by 317,958 tons. Production of steel by the United States Steel Corporation was greater even than in 1920. For the fourth successive month automobile production established a new record.

Freight carloadings reported by the railroads for the last week have only been twice exceeded. The month of April showed an unusually high rate of earnings. These earnings represent a return, on an annual basis, of 6½% on the Interstate Commerce Commission's tentative valuation, and exceed, for this month alone, the return designated by the Commission as a fair one. Earnings for the first four months of the year, however, are less than the 5¾% allowed by the Commission.

The latest report from the Bureau of Immigration shows that the immigration quotas of the various nations are being rapidly exhausted. Germany alone has a large proportion of her quota unused. There has been a large net gain in immigration this year against a large net loss last year. This change in the alien tide reflects prosperity and high wages in this country.

Legislation

The Evening Mail (New York, N. Y.) states editorially that decision of U. S. Supreme Court upholding Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act is "doubly welcome to every one who appreciates the seriousness of the high infant and maternity death rates in this country. . . ."

"The Sheppard-Towner act was attacked first as an illegal usurpation of reserved State powers by the Federal Government. This plea the court dismissed with the remark that the act does not compel the States to do anything; it merely gives them an opportunity to avail themselves of a Federal appropriation by matching it with a State appropriation. The act was also attacked on the ground that it was illegal and that the levy of taxation under it would constitute the taking of property without due process of law. On that point Justice Sutherland said: 'The right of a taxpayer to enjoin the execution of a Federal appropriation act on the ground that it is invalid and will result in taxation for illegal purposes has never been passed upon by this court. In cases where it was presented the question has either been allowed to pass sub silentio or the determination of it expressly withheld.'

"Many States have already availed themselves of the act, New York being the latest. We hope that before many years the educative and hygienic benefits of it will result in the saving of many of the 250,000 children and 25,000 mothers who die now as the result of poor care at childbirth."

Judge Creed in Municipal Court at Boston, Mass., fined the publisher of *The Boston Transcript* \$100 after he had been found guilty of refusing to print a report of Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission, according to *The New York Times*.

The publisher appealed, and his case now is expected to go to Supreme Court on a question of constitutional law.

Complaint was culmination of the refusal of the *Transcript* to print in its columns an advertisement submitted by Minimum Wage Commission in which the commission showed that the L. P. Hollander Company was paying less than minimum wage recommended by the commission for women and girls. This advertisement was printed in several other Boston papers, but the *Transcript* refused to run it on the ground, it is said, that it might lay the paper open to civil action. The commission decided to prosecute under the provision of the act which defines its duties and which is intended to compel newspapers to print reports of the commission when offered at the regular advertising rates.

Governor of California has signed bill 651, making it unlawful for an employer to misrepresent housing or other labor conditions to those seeking positions.

Workmen's Compensation

Claimant asked compensation as dependent mother of employee, who died as result of accident which arose out of and in course of employment. It appears that she was stepmother of deceased. In this case Industrial Commission of Utah held that a "stepmother is not a proper party to make application for compensation" before the Commission. Her claim is, therefore, not allowed. As no dependent within meaning of Act survived employee, the employer is directed to pay \$998.40 into State Treasury in accordance with Section 3140, subsection 1, of State Industrial Act.

While employee, who was a minor 17 years old, was helping to push a car down an incline, he sustained injuries to his left foot and peronial nerve when foot slipped from running board and was caught beneath car. As result of accident, employee

has lost use of 70% of left foot. In this case New York Industrial Board held that employee was injured in an accident arising out of and in course of employment and is therefore entitled to compensation. In determining amount of award, allowance must be made for fact that employee was a minor and that under normal conditions it would be reasonable to expect that his wages would increase. His wage, therefore, is determined at \$27 and an award of specific compensation for loss of use of 70% of left foot is made on this finding. Compensation at rate of \$18 per week for 143½ weeks was awarded.

Labor Supply

U. S. Bureau of Immigration reports that status of immigration of aliens into United States, under Per-centum Limit Act, to May 31, 1923, is as follows (total annual quota, 357,803):

Country	Annual Quota	Admitted July 1, 1922, to May 31, 1923
Austria.....	7,451	7,331
Bulgaria.....	302	295
Danzig.....	301	233
Denmark.....	5,619	4,630
Fiume.....	71	67
France.....	5,729	4,646
Germany.....	67,607	40,934
Iceland.....	75	53
Norway.....	12,202	10,950
Poland (Incl. Eastern Galicia and Pinsk Region).....	31,146	29,361
Estonian Region.....	1,348	223
Latvian Region.....	1,540	1,484
Sweden.....	20,042	19,106
Atlantic Highlands.....	121	113

Quotas of following countries have been exhausted: Albania, Armenia (Russian), Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal, Rumania, Russia (including Bessarabian Region), Lithuanian and Memel Regions, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia, Other Europe, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Other Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands.

Director of Ohio State-City Employment Bureau reports that supply of labor in northeastern Ohio is greater than demand for both men and women workers. During first two weeks of May Bureau's work was at peak to supply demand, but during last two weeks there were more workers than there were jobs.

Industrial Relations

First formal declaration against *snowballing* of wages ever written into a New York (N. Y.) union contract, according to press notices, was made on June 6, when Allied Building Metal Industries and Local 52 of Housesmiths' International Union signed an agreement until January 1, 1924. *Anti-snowballing* clause reads as follows:

"It is thoroughly understood and agreed that the parties hereto, the association and the union, will exercise the utmost discipline possible to prevent their members, either individually, collectively, in conjunction with each other or in conjunction with others, from snowballing wages.

"The term 'snowballing' is understood to mean the practice on the part of employers of offering, in order to secure workmen, higher wages than those provided for by agreement and the practice on the part of workmen individually or collectively demanding, before accepting employment, higher wages than those provided by agreement."

Employers consented to pay additional \$1 per day to the iron workers until December 31, 1923. This is in line with extra compensation which has been granted to 38 crafts of the 44 in the old Building Trades Council.

Conferences between employers and employees in other industries are being held, and it is expected that similar wage increases will be granted in remaining crafts.

Latest press reports on bricklayers' strike in N. Y. City state that both bricklayers and Mason Builders' Association are now considering proposal of a compromise settlement made by Public Group of Building Industry, which has suggested an \$11 per day wage for bricklayers until Jan. 1, 1926, instead of \$12 per day wage and two-year contract.

Boston (Mass) News Bureau reports that New England Telephone & Telegraph Co. refuses to recede from its stand that present time is not one for increasing wages or shortening hours of telephone operators, who will therefore poll strike vote June 19.

Situation in Brockton, Mass., shoe strike shows continued improvement, according to statement of Brockton Shoe Manufacturers' Association. At this season of year about 6,500 operatives are employed and, it is estimated, about that number are now working.

After two years of organization work, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America called a general strike on June 5 of approximately 2,000 Buffalo (N. Y.) clothing workers, demanding union recognition and increased wages. Latest press reports state that 13 manufacturers have signed union agreements and about 400 employees have returned to work.

Three thousand miners of Burnside, Sterling, Henry Clay and Big Mountain collieries in Pennsylvania, owned and operated by Reading Company, who struck on May 26, 1923, in an effort to compel retail coal sales clerks to join United Mine

Workers, returned to work on June 6. Arbitration was arranged.

In decision rendered on June 9, Railroad Labor Board recognized right of Joseph Greek, General Chairman of United Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and Railway Shop Laborers on Pennsylvania system, to represent carrier's employees in that organization. Carrier protested at hearing of dispute on ground that its maintenance men were members of a company union and had elected a representative other than Mr. Greek. Board also ruled that an agreement negotiated by carrier and a committee of the organization Aug. 15, 1921, should be continued in effect until changed in conformity with terminating clause of contract.

Nation-wide strike of coal miners last year cost country approximately \$1,000,000,000, according to Chairman of the Bituminous Operators' General Committee.

"Official estimates," he said, "put the cost of strikes during 1922 at \$2,500,000,000. . . Of this enormous total, it is estimated that the nation-wide coal strike made up two-fifths, or \$1,000,000,000. The loss to the miners in wages alone was \$350,000,000. That is at the rate of more than a million dollars a day for every working day in the year. Losses to the operators and, most important, the public made up the balance of the \$1,000,000,000. This is exclusive of the losses in the anthracite fields.

"Taking the entire coal industry, the striking miners lost in idle time because of the strike 38,000 years of working time.

"These are dead losses. They are losses which are shared among every man, woman, and child in the United States. No one, in the remotest village of the country, can escape paying a share of it in one way or another.

"While these are dead losses that never can be recovered, they ought to have the value of a horrible example of what must be avoided in the future. The country is sick and tired of coal strikes, railroad strikes and every other kind of strike."

Cost of Living

According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, retail food prices showed the following percentage increases (+) or decreases (-) in periods indicated:

City	April 15. 1923 to May 15. 1923	May 15. 1922 to May 15. 1923	1913 to May 15. 1923
Baltimore, Md.	+1	+3	+49
Boston, Mass.	‡	+6	+47
Bridgeport, Conn.	+1	+8	**
Buffalo, N. Y.	-*	+4	+47
Butte, Mont.	+1	+1	**
Cleveland, Ohio	+1	+7	+43
Fall River, Mass.	-*	+4	+45
Indianapolis, Ind.	+*	+4	+40
Little Rock, Ark.	+*	+2	+39
Louisville, Ky.	+1	+3	+34
Manchester, N. H.	-*	+5	+45
Memphis, Tenn.	-1	+1	+36
Newark, N. J.	-1	+5	+41
New Haven, Conn.	-1	+6	+43
Norfolk, Va.	+1	+1	**
Omaha, Neb.	+*	+1	+41
Philadelphia, Pa.	+4	+5	+49
Pittsburgh, Pa.	+*	+7	+45
Portland, Me.	+*	+5	**
Providence, R. I.	+*	+5	+48
Richmond, Va.	‡	-*	+53
San Francisco, Cal.	+1	+3	+38

*Less than five-tenths of 1%.

†Remained the same.

**Prices were not obtained in 1913.

Trade Unionism

The Christian Science Monitor (Boston, Mass.) reports that one of the oddest developments in labor situation in West Virginia is shutdown of the Coal River Collieries at Ashford, W. Va., an organization capitalized at \$2,500,000 in which nearly all the stock is held by members of Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the President of the Brotherhood is Chairman of Board of Directors. In spite of this control, the Coal River Collieries are closed because of a controversy between United Mine Workers and the management. The company, it is said, stands firm in its decision that its mines shall be worked on the "open shop" policy. Nonunion labor is reported employed at the Collieries'

Eureka mine at Prestonsburg, Ky. The mine at Ashford is in the Coal River district, where a number of mines are on a union basis, while others are not under agreement with the union but pay the union wage scale. At main office of Coal River Collieries hope was expressed that work might be resumed with the union wage scale but without a "closed shop" agreement. It is understood that company officials are determined not to recognize the United Mine Workers.

At 20th annual convention of Maine Federation of Labor, President of Federation made following recommendation: To take definite action to make 48-hour law issue a success at fall special election.

Wages and Hours

Secretary of Railway Employees' Department of American Federation of Labor has announced that negotiations have been opened by Federated Shop Crafts, representing 54,000 employees of Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, the Chicago and Northwestern, and the Southern Railway systems, for wage increases and return of time and one-half pay for overtime and Sunday work. Union seeks restoration of wages in effect before Railroad Labor Board's cut, over which F. S. C. struck last year, Secretary stated. Agreements reached so far have been at three cents per hour rate, bringing wages to 73 cents per hour, three cents above Railroad Labor Board's rate.

Shopmen of Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad have received wage increase of two cents per hour, according to press reports.

Employees on following railroads have received wage increases (per hour):

Pennsylvania System: Maintenance of way employees, from 1-3 cents; signal department, 5 cents; shop employees, 3 cents; station, warehouse, storehouse and elevator forces, engine and train crew callers, and laborers in and around stations, warehouses and storehouses, 1-3 cents; effective May 1 and April 16, 1923. Stationary engineers (steam) and boiler room employees, 2 cents, effective May 1. *Pittsburgh & West Virginia and West Side Belt R. R. Co.*: Shop craft employees, 3 cents, effective June 1. *San Antonio & Arkansas Pass. R. R.*: All classes of maintenance-of-way employees, including stationary engineers and boiler room employees, from 1-3 cents per hour and \$5 to \$6.12 per month, effective June 1. *Washington Terminal Company*: Certain employees in maintenance department, 2-3 cents, effective April 16. *Chicago & North Western R. R.*: Maintenance-of-way, 1-6 cents. *Chesapeake & Ohio*: Shopmen, 2 cents. *Philadelphia & Reading*: Signalmen, 4 cents. *Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific*, and *Chicago, Rock Island & Gulf*, 2 cents, effective June 16. *Wabash System*: Maintenance-of-way, from one-half to 9 cents.

Trade and Commerce

U. S. Steel Corporation reports reduction of 307,158 tons in amount of forward business carried on books at end of May. Total orders on books on May 31, 1923, were 6,981,351 tons, as compared with 7,288,509 tons at end of previous month and 5,254,228 tons on May 31, 1922. Reduction, it is stated, was larger than had been expected. It is estimated that new business received during month was equal to about 75% of capacity.

According to Bradstreets' record, there were 1,467 business failures in United States in May, 1923, a decrease of 10% as compared with April, 1923, and 11% with May, 1922. Liabilities in May, 1923, to-

taled \$31,765,102, a decrease of 38%, as compared with April, 1923, and 20% with May, 1922. Total number of failures is smallest reported since last September and, with that exception, is smallest in two years. Extent of liabilities shows up even more favorably than does total of suspensions, which are smallest for any month since August, 1920, when business boom which culminated in that year was at its peak.

National Association of Manufacturers reports that business in state of New York is fair and prospects bright for fall trade.

"There has been increase of employment, wages have increased, sales are keeping up with production and passing it in some instances and there is almost total absence of labor disturbances," according to reports compiled by association from its membership.

Philadelphia (Pa.) Public Ledger reports that eight of Philadelphia's largest industrial plants and employers of thousands of skilled and unskilled labor have sufficient orders on hand to permit virtually capacity operations throughout the summer. In some instances operations will be limited somewhat only through an insufficient supply of labor. Several plants have booked orders to warrant full time until end of year.

Among plants reporting this business are: The Baldwin Locomotive Works, J. G. Brill Company, Electric Storage Battery Company, Tioga Steel and Iron Company, Tacony Forge Company, Southwark Foundry and Machine Company, Niles-Bement-Pond Company, William Cramp & Sons Ship and Engine Building Company, Henry Disston & Sons, Inc., E. G. Budd Manufacturing Company and the Budd Wheel Corporation. They make locomotives, street cars, storage batteries, and radio supplies, steel, hydro-electric machinery, chain belts, ships, saws and files and automobile bodies and wheels.

New orders in virtually all lines represented have not been coming in as great a volume as was case in first four months of year. This is, in part, attributable to seasonable conditions and in some cases to a hesitancy on part of purchasers who expect present tendency in building trades to restrict operations, which will be reflected in lower prices before third quarter of year is far advanced.

The Iron Age (New York, N. Y.) reports another new record was made in country's iron production during May, 1923. Total output for months was 3,867,694 tons or 124,764 tons per day, as compared with 3,549,736 tons in April, 1923, or 118,324 tons per day. All previous records had already been surpassed by daily average of April.

Transportation

U. S. Shipping Board has named committee to plan organization that will operate Government fleet "to cover fully world trade routes," according to press notices. This move is in keeping with decision of Board to proceed with direct Government operation of sufficient vessels to keep American flag on all trade routes, it was reported. Under resolution adopted by Board, Committee will "prepare a plan to be submitted to the Shipping Board with a view to the formation of such companies or organizations, to be owned and controlled by the Shipping Board, as it may ascertain to be necessary for the purpose of operating sufficient vessels to fully cover world trade routes under the American flag consonant with the greatest possible economy

and efficiency in direct Government operations."

April, 1923, net railway operating income on Class I. railroads, totaling \$83,197,800, represents a return on an annual basis of 6½% on Interstate Commerce Commission's tentative valuation, according to statement of American Railway Association. In April, 1922, net operating income was equivalent to 3.99% and in March, 1923, to 5.84% on the tentative valuation. April rate of 6½% is highest return earned in any month since passage of the Transportation Act of 1920. Even with this favorable return for month of April, however, railroads for year 1923 are still behind 5¾% earning allowed by I. C. C., as roads during first four months of 1923 had net operating income of \$266,246,000, which on annual basis would represent a return of 5.49% on their tentative valuation. Net operating income and rate of return on tentative valuation in first four months of 1923 were as follows:

Month	Net Operating Income	Rate of Return
January.....	\$60,654,700	5.54
February.....	38,903,000	3.73
March.....	83,568,473	5.84
April.....	83,197,800	6.50

Car loadings for week ended May 26, 1923, were 1,014,029 for entire United States, a new record for this season of year and, with exception of two weeks, largest loadings in history of the railroads, according to report of American Railway Association. Prior to week of May 26, the million-car loading mark was exceeded only seven times, and in each case in Fall of the year, due to heavy crop movements. An important fact

in new high record for this time of year, is the increase in loadings of merchandise and miscellaneous freight. This item, generally accepted by business men as an indication of trend of general business in United States, showed a gain of 5,242 cars over preceding week, and 44,304 cars over corresponding week of 1922.

Foreign

The Economist (London, England) reports that in order to prepare for the inevitable development of Chinese cotton industry, and to insure that British influence and British machinery shall have their share in the process, it is proposed to establish a School of Textile Industry at Shanghai, in which instruction will be given both in technical manufacturing processes and in scientific and economic conditions governing production, including means for promoting efficiency and securing welfare of the workers. Scheme is actively supported by Textile Machinery Makers' Association, whose headquarters are at Manchester, England, on ground that it would stimulate sale of British machines in China, where American and German competition is becoming acute.

Some of machinery needed will probably be presented by British manufacturers, and it is hoped to obtain a share of the Boxer indemnity wherewith to start the enterprise and provide part of its annual cost. Remainder will be furnished by subscriptions from Chinese manufacturers and by students' fees, and the best students will be enabled by scholarships to complete their training in England. Other British industries concerned may possibly aid in the work.

The Bulletin of the Federation of British Industries (London, Eng-

land) reports that Industrial Welfare Society has approached British Broadcasting Company, Limited, with a view to securing a change of time in the transmission of the mid-day concert, so as to enable industrial workers to "listen in" during their dinner hour. The Secretary of the Society writes:

"We understand that this proposal will receive favourable consideration if evidence of a fairly general desire on the part of commercial and industrial firms to avail themselves of these facilities is produced. Hundreds of thousands of workers take their mid-day meals in canteens and mess-rooms provided by their employers, and we have evidence that many firms are willing to install receiving apparatus if the times of the mid-day transmission are re-arranged."

Membership of the Federation of Trade Unions in Austria has shown continuous increase during period 1917-1922, according to following table published by The International Labour Office (Geneva, Switzerland):

Year	Membership	Increase
1917	142,295	11,598
1918	262,808	120,513
1919	378,381	115,573
1920	771,585	393,204
1921	771,659	74
1922	850,394	78,735

Due to depreciation in German currency, various methods of calculating wages have been proposed in Germany. In province of Silesia a new method has been adopted in case of foresters. A collective agreement for 1923 has been concluded providing that their wages shall be calculated in hundredweights of rye. Money wage will then be calculated according to average price of rye on the Breslau market. Foresters who are housebuilders also receive certain payments in like manner. A similar system of payment is already in force in Pomerania.